

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Sanford Bishop announced today that he is cosponsoring the Program for Real Energy Security or PROGRESS Act, which would initiate a major national effort to make our nation energy independent and advance our economic, national and environmental security.

“I am cosponsoring the PROGRESS Act because it will take our nation in a new direction on energy. I am confident that we can give our children a safer nation, stronger economy and healthier environment if we commit ourselves to the goals outlined in this important bill,” said Congressman Bishop.

“Our dependence on foreign sources of oil is a threat to our national security,” continued Bishop. “In addition, it is becoming increasingly clear that continued attention on developing energy from agricultural products could provide a tremendous economic benefit to the Second Congressional District of Georgia. By harnessing the ingenuity to invent new technologies, we can create jobs, protect our environment, and increase our security.”

The PROGRESS Act would launch a national effort to make substantial gains in technology, conservation, vehicle efficiency, and the use of alternative fuels. The proposals in this legislation are designed to complement Democrats’ Innovation Agenda, and the House Democrats’ Rural Working Group’s Biofuels Plan.

The PROGRESS Act has five major components:

- Establish a National Energy Security Commission that would bring together government, industry and academic leaders to develop national goals that respect regional energy solutions and develop recommendations that Congress would have to act upon under expedited rules. Right now there is no entity that brings such experts together in common cause.
- Establish a New Manhattan Center for High Efficiency Vehicles that would result in the widespread availability of technologies to double the current average vehicle efficiency, diversify types of fuels, and continue to develop the future of fuel cells and hydrogen. The Center would ensure that Americans drive more efficient cars and have a choice of fuels and energy sources.
- Establish a National Biofuels Infrastructure Development Program that would promote development of wholesale and retail biofuels pumps, tanks, and other related distribution equipment. Vehicles that run on ethanol and biodiesel are being produced. But we must develop biofuel infrastructure to make them practical and widespread.
- Promote Transit Use & Develop a Rail Infrastructure Program that would create a stimulus package to promote public transit and infrastructure investment that upgrades the “pipeline” for biofuels – the freight rail system – in order to get an affordable and reliable supply of biofuels to market.
- Ensure Federal Government Leadership in the Use of the Alternatives to Oil by increasing the use of alternative fuels in federal and state fleets, developing biofuel plants in every region of the country, and speeding development of standards that are needed to promote alternative fuels use. The federal government is one of the leading owners of vehicle fleets and consumers of petroleum products. The government must lead by example.

The PROGRESS Act focuses on transportation and its contribution to our dependence on foreign oil and damage to the environment. More than 65 percent of the oil our nation consumes goes toward transportation.